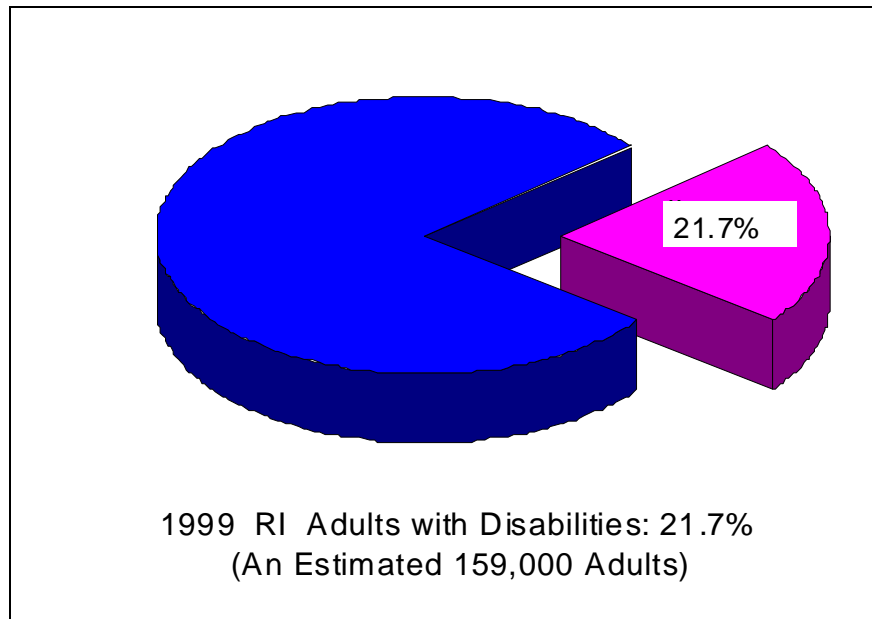

Rhode Island DISABILITY FACTS in 1999

An Update of the “*Rhode Island Disability Chartbook*” with the 1999 Rhode Island BRFSS data

October 2001

- ❖ ***More than one in five RI non-institutionalized adults (21.7%; an estimated 159,000 adults) had experienced some kind of activity limitations because of any impairment or health problem (Figure 1).***

Figure 1. Estimated Prevalence of Disability among RI Adults, 1999



Data Source:

This brief update presents the results from an analysis of the 1999 Rhode Island Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (RIBRFSS) survey data. The RIBRFSS, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is an ongoing, statewide, random-digit-dialed telephone survey of the noninstitutionalized RI adults aged 18 and older to monitor the prevalence of key health- and safety-related behaviors. The 1999 RIBRFSS survey consisted of 4,003 telephone interviews with extensive information on disability/quality of life.

Case Definition of Disability:

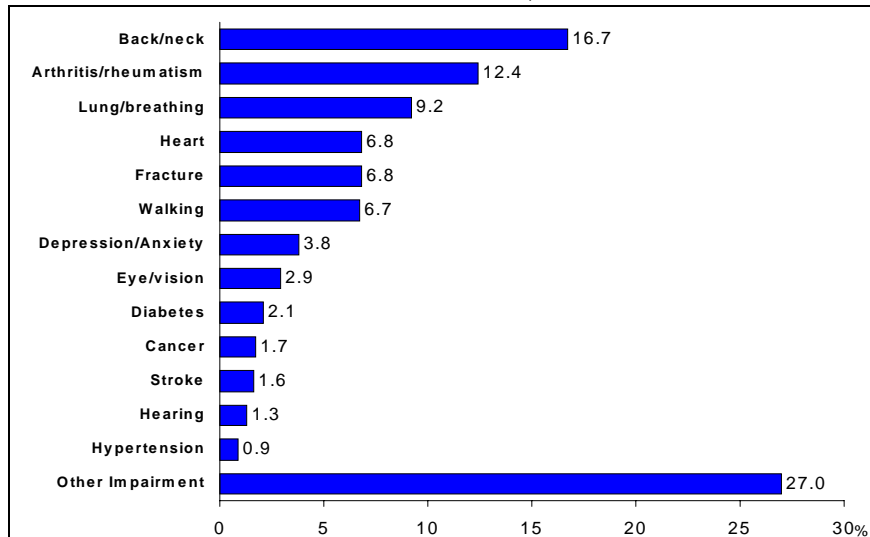
Persons who answered “yes” to any of the following questions were defined as having a disability:

- Are you limited in the kind or amount of work you can do because of any impairment or health problem?
- Because of any impairment or health problem, do you have any trouble learning, remembering, or concentrating?
- Do you use special equipment or help from others to get around?
- Are you limited in any way in any activities because of any impairment or health problem?

Major Health Problem

- ❖ **The most frequently reported impairments or health problems were: back/neck problems (16.7%), arthritis/rheumatism (12.4%), lung/breathing problems (9.2%), heart problems (6.8%), fractures (6.8%), and walking problems (6.7%) (Figure 2).**

Figure 2. Major Impairment or Health Problem Limiting Activities*
Rhode Island Adults, 1999



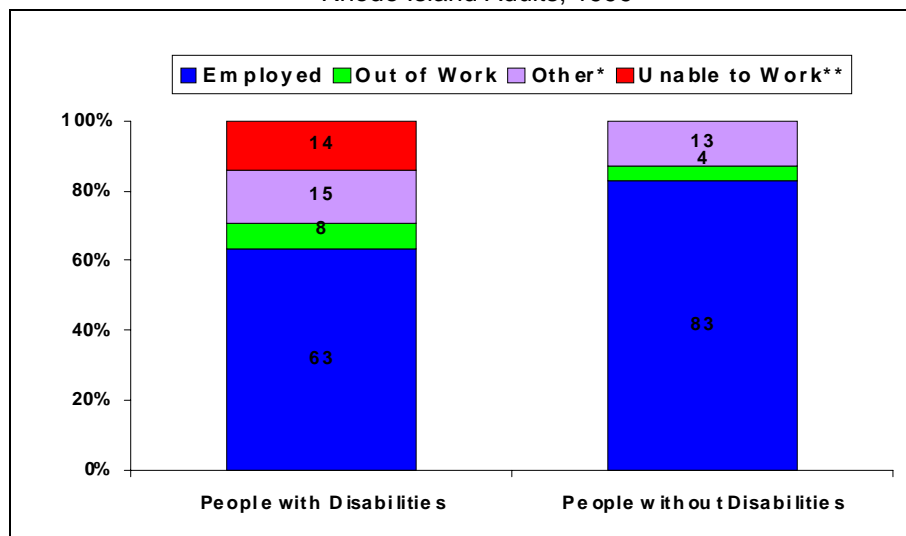
* Among those who were defined as having a disability (n=841).

Note: Hearing problems might be under-represented because of telephone interviews.

Employment Status

- ❖ **Among working age adults (21-64 years of age), 63% of people with disabilities were either employed for wages or self-employed, compared to 83% of people without disabilities (Figure 3).**

Figure 3. Employment Status of Working Age Adults (21-64) by Disability Status
Rhode Island Adults, 1999



* Other includes home makers, students, and the retired.

** Unable to work due to a disability.

Comparison of Health Risks

❖ **Health Status**

People with disabilities were much more likely than people without disabilities to report **poor general health** (29.3% vs. 6.9%), **poor physical health** (22.1% vs. 3.0%), and **poor mental health** (17.9% vs. 4.1%) (Figure 4).

❖ **Unmet Need for Medical Care**

People with disabilities were more likely to report that there was a time during the past year they **could not see a doctor** because of the cost (13.3% vs. 5.6%).

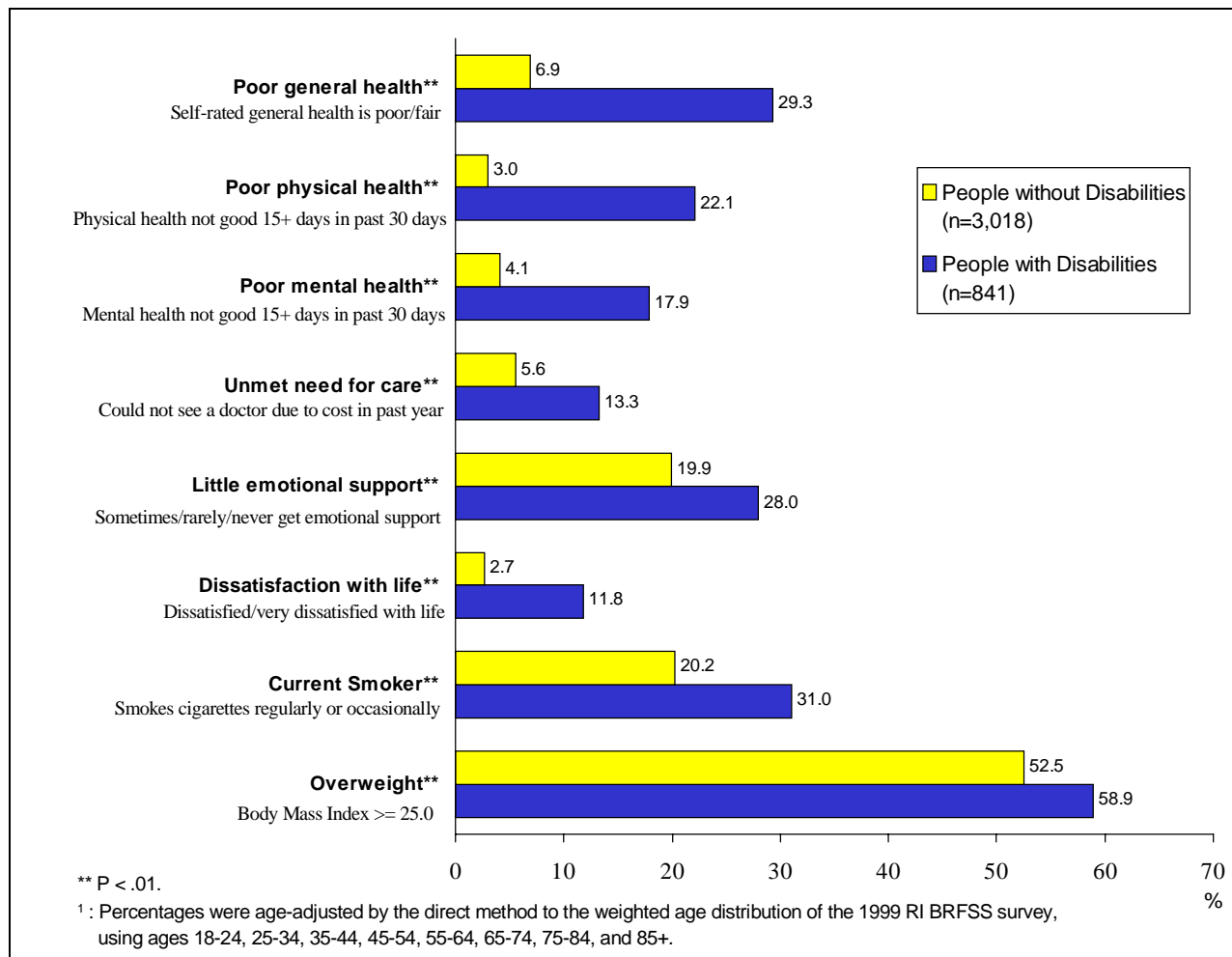
❖ **Emotional Support/Life Satisfaction**

People with disabilities were more likely to report that they got **insufficient emotional support** (28.0% vs. 19.9%) and were **dissatisfied with life** (11.8% vs. 2.7%).

❖ **Behavioral Risks**

People with disabilities were more likely to be **current smokers** (31.0% vs. 20.2%), and more likely to be **overweight** (58.9% vs. 52.5%).

Figure 4. Comparison of Health Risks by Disability Status
Rhode Island Adults, 1999
(Age-Adjusted Percentage¹)



Socio-Demographic Characteristics

- ❖ ***The prevalence of disability was higher among the elderly, minorities, persons with less education and persons with lower incomes than their counterparts (Table 1).***

Table 1. Estimated Prevalence of Disability by Socio-Demographic Characteristics
Rhode Island Adults, 1999
(in percentages, with 95% confidence interval limits)

	Unadjusted Percent	Age-Adjusted Percent ¹
Age		
18-44	15.3 ± 1.8	-
45-64	23.5 ± 2.8	-
65-74	34.1 ± 5.2	-
75 or Older	37.9 ± 5.9	-
Gender		
Male	20.3 ± 2.3	21.1 ± 2.3
Female	23.0 ± 2.0	22.4 ± 1.9
Race/Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	21.4 ± 1.6	20.7 ± 1.5
non-White or Hispanic	23.5 ± 4.7	28.1 ± 5.7
Education (25+ years)		
Less than H.S.	36.7 ± 5.5	33.7 ± 5.9
H.S. Graduate/GED	23.7 ± 2.9	22.9 ± 2.8
Some College	24.2 ± 3.3	26.1 ± 3.5
College Graduate	16.3 ± 2.4	17.5 ± 2.6
Household Income		
<\$15,000	37.8 ± 6.3	41.7 ± 7.0
\$15,000-\$24,999	31.4 ± 4.8	30.4 ± 4.9
\$25,000-\$49,999	20.5 ± 2.9	22.0 ± 3.1
≥\$50,000	14.1 ± 2.4	15.2 ± 3.2

Note: Persons who answered "don't know/ not sure" or "refused" were excluded from the analysis.

¹ Percentages were age-adjusted by direct method to the weighted age distribution of the 1999 RI BRFSS survey, using ages 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, and 85+.

www.healthri.org/family/chartbook.pdf

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This publication series will provide a foundation for developing policies/programs to promote the health and wellness of people with disabilities.